

DRAFT

Strategic Plan 1992-97

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INTRODUCTION

The ASPIRA Association's **Strategic Plan: 1992-97** is a corporate planning guide and roadmap created to chart the course of the organization for the next five years. It is intended to be a dynamic, working document, subject to amendments as necessary to accommodate internal and external changes--both challenges and opportunities. The plan also serves as a focal point from which to measure the progress of the National Office in meeting its goals and objectives. Each of the strategic goals has been designed to be both discrete and synergistic: as any one goals is met, its achievement enables or contributes to the achievement of one or more other goals.

The development of the Plan has benefitted from participation of the Board members, Executive Directors and staff of the Association, particularly from the results of three leadership retreats held in 1989, 1991 and 1992. It envisions a National Office which better balances its work of implementing strong, well run and documented national programs with developing effective capacity building initiatives for the entire Association: a National Office which nationally represents the Puerto Rican/Latino community we serve and promotes the growth and visibility of the entire Association. While affirming ASPIRA's program priorities approved in 1988--financial health, organizational growth and empowerment--ASPIRA's leadership has refocused and redefined the priorities presented in this Plan for the next five years.

MISSION

The philosophy that determines the goals of ASPIRA and the activities undertaken to meet those goals rests on one basic premise: Latinos, as community, possess the collective potential to develop their own human and material resources that will permit an equitable sharing in the socioeconomic benefits and responsibilities of the larger society.

Keeping to the primary tenets of that philosophy, ASPIRA has identified as its mission the enhancement of the Puerto Rican/Latino community by developing and nurturing the leadership, intellectual and cultural potential of its youth so that they may contribute their skills and dedication to the fullest development of Puerto Rican/Latino communities everywhere.

CORPORATE GOALS

As a family of Associates with community roots in six states and Puerto Rico, the ASPIRA Association is unified toward a common cause through our commitment to achieve three broad primary Association goals. The three board primary goals provide the basic general programmatic composition of each member of the ASPIRA Association. It is through commonality of primary goals that the ASPIRA Movement can realize its unifying mission. Within the framework of these goals, each Associate establishes program objectives which are sensitive to local conditions and resources. These goals are:

1. To develop the leadership potential of Puerto Rican and other Latino youth by encouraging them to become aware of the socioeconomic conditions, needs, and potential of their community and by fostering a commitment to dedicate their skills toward the further development of the Latino community;
2. To motivate, orient and assist Puerto Rican and other Latino youth in their personal, intellectual, cultural, and educational development through the provision of career information, counseling and education services; and
3. To increase access of Puerto Rican and other Latino youth to quality education and leadership training through research, pilot programs and advocacy.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Financial Strength

The ASPIRA Association, Inc. needs to expand and diversify its revenue base in order to provide organizational stability and expand its services. In pursuing this course of action it is understood that no single source of revenue can or should be relied upon as perpetual, controlling or stable. It is therefore prudent that ASPIRA provide for its growth and development as a nonprofit organization through a well-planned program which accommodates the need for a balanced yet flexible mix of revenues.

Policy Guide: Provide for financial stability and growth through leverage and diversification of resources.

- Increase ratio of unrestricted to restricted funds

A higher ratio of unrestricted to restricted revenues will provide the organization with flexibility to expand and explore new areas for strengthening the Association and will also provide a measure of protection from financial vulnerability.

- Increase funds for general administrative operations.

Organizational growth and program expansion require adequate funds for general administrative operations which in turn provide the infrastructural support for new development.

- Expand the endowment fund as a long term source of unrestricted revenue.

Endowment revenues will in the long term, provide relatively stable income to improve the financial health and flexibility of the organization.

- Strengthen coordinated Association-wide fundraising and marketing activities.

Coordinated fundraising and marketing will project a forceful image of the ASPIRA Association which will enhance ASPIRA's fundraising competitiveness.

- Develop national data collection and reporting mechanisms for the Association.

As competition for funds increases, the need to document ASPIRA's successes grows. Enhancing the data collecting and reporting capability will increase the organization's capability to report nationally and locally for program improvement and marketing purposes. An interactive computer system can improve the speed of communication.

- Increase the participation of influential Aspirantes and other supporters in fund development.

Thirty years of successful experience in developing leaders have produced an organizational credibility and a cadre of Aspirantes who are in a position to "give back" to their community. These supporters will assist in identifying and contributing human and material resources to benefit young Aspirantes.

Organizational Growth

The ASPIRA Movement has a thirty-year history of providing quality programs and educational opportunities for Puerto Rican and other Latino youth. That history and experience has generated continuous requests for expansion to new sites. As the only national Latino youth organization, ASPIRA is positioned to put in place a comprehensive plan for expanding into new locations, strengthening existing programs, and developing new programs in areas of strategic importance.

Policy Guide: Maintain a level of national pre-eminence in Latino youth leadership development and educational excellence by developing pilot programs and enhancing technical assistance to current ASPIRAs and to communities desiring to develop new ASPIRA affiliates.

- Develop tools and training teams for interested communities to implement the ASPIRA Process and programs

Although the ASPIRA model has been operating for decades, guides for implementation of the ASPIRA Process and other key programs are largely nonexistent. Documentation of the ASPIRA Process and programs, development of tools, and training teams will facilitate development of new ASPIRA's by communities and will strengthen existing programs.

- Expand national programs in career areas of critical need in the Puerto Rican/Latino community.

In seeking to enhance the access of Puerto Rican and other Latinos to careers, ASPIRA will continue to identify areas of underrepresentation and to develop programs. At present Mathematics and Science careers and parent involvement programs have been identified as key areas of need.

- Strengthen and expand Association-wide staff training opportunities.

Joint staff training sessions take place through national programs and through the ASPIRA/ETS Collaborative. Association-wide training provides opportunities for information exchange and enhances the sense of community and cooperation among staff.

Empowerment

Success in fulfilling ASPIRA's mission and meeting its corporate goals requires a foundation of effective and continuous communication, dialogue and advocacy. The interaction is also key to ASPIRA's growth and development, inasmuch as information exchange maintains its viability and credibility. As a recognized player in local and national Latino education, ASPIRA must maintain its existing relationships and build new ones. Moreover, as a member of the national education community, it has a responsibility to bring to it a Latino voice and presence.

Policy Guide: Strengthen the national visibility and credibility of ASPIRA as the premier Latino youth organization.

- Strengthen and expand communications and working relationships across a broad base of education policymakers, funders and audiences.

ASPIRA's presence in Washington, D.C. provides the Association with potential rapid access to information on federal funding opportunities, technical assistance information and congressional relations. Additionally, most national education organizations have their headquarters in Washington, DC, facilitating, networking and collaborating on issues of mutual interest.

- Increase the visibility of ASPIRA and its accomplishments.

Thirty years of successful experience in Puerto Rican and Latino youth leadership development have produced a cadre of Aspirantes whose accomplishments will be increasingly highlighted.

- Develop mechanisms to strengthen local and national advocacy communication within the Association on education issues of local and national importance with potential impact on Puerto Rican/Latino populations.

The interplay between the national and local education policy arenas provide opportunities for the Association to strengthen its advocacy efforts. As the National Office works with Congress to ensure passage of legislation appropriate to the communities served, mechanisms to strengthen local/national communication are needed. In addition, ASPIRA's student and parent advocacy need strengthening.

- Expand ASPIRA's capability and expertise in marketing and public relations.

ASPIRA has developed recognition in those states that have ASPIRA offices. Outside of those areas, ASPIRA remains a "well kept secret". An Association-wide coordinated marketing plan will increase ASPIRA's visibility and clout. Aspirantes have an important role in this effort through highlighting their personal experiences.

- Mobilize the Puerto Rican/Latino community on issues of importance.

ASPIRA's history clearly demonstrates the organization's capability to react and mobilize the community on issues of importance. These struggles generally arise as local but often have a national impact. Identifying, analyzing and generating concerted action on relevant policies and practices is vital to achieving desired change. Students and parents are vital advocacy agents.

- Improve and expand research on areas relative to Puerto Rican/Latino education excellence.

ASPIRA has a history of conducting groundbreaking research on educational issues that are of vital importance but are too often ignored. The organization has not been able to sustain these efforts in an ongoing way because of lack of staff. Tapping existing research programs and developing relationships with Latino researchers are among the mechanisms that need to be explored.